

REMARKS

Introduction

Claims 1-155, 292-393, 400-408, 425-447, 456, 461, 465, 469, and 486-522 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 194-196, 203, 205, 215-219, 262-264, 267, 269, 270, 272, 273, 275, 276, 278, 279, 281, 282, 284, 285, 287, 288, 290, 291, 409, 448, 453, 458, 471, 476, and 481 have been amended. Claims 523-530 have been added. Claims 156-193, 197-202, 204, 206-214, 220-261, 265, 266, 268, 271, 274, 277, 280, 283, 286, 289, 394-399, 410-424, 449-452, 454, 455, 457, 459, 460, 462-464, 466-468, and 470, 472-475, 477-480, and 482-485 are also currently pending in this case.

The Examiner has rejected claims 220-255 and 262-264 for obviousness-type double-patenting over claims 1-36 of U.S. Patent 6,682,981 (hereinafter "the '981 patent"), issued on parent Application No. 09/775,597, filed February 5, 2001. The Examiner has rejected claims 397-399 for obviousness-type double-patenting over claims 1, 15, and 26 of the '981 patent in view of Leedy U.S. Patent 5,869,354. The Examiner has allowed claims 156-219, 256-261, 264-291, 394-396, 409-424, 448-455, 457-460, 462-464, 466-468, and 470-485.

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 156-219, 256-261, 264-291, 394-396, 409-424, 448-455, 457-460, 462-464, 466-468, and 470-485. Applicant is submitting concurrently herewith a Terminal Disclaimer Under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.321(b,c). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Reply to the Double-Patenting Rejection

Although applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's reasoning for propounding this rejection, applicant is submitting concurrently herewith a Terminal Disclaimer Under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.321(b,c), disclaiming the terminal portion of the term of any patent to be issued on the present application, Application No. 10/665,757, which would extend beyond the expiration date (currently April 8, 2012*) of the full statutory term of U.S. Patent 6,682,981. Accordingly, the Examiner's double-patenting rejection of claims 220-255, 262-264, and 397-399 is respectfully traversed, and applicant respectfully submits that the double-patenting rejection should be withdrawn.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge \$130.00, in payment of the fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.20(d), and any additional fee that may be due, in connection with the Terminal Disclaimer, to Deposit Account No. 06-1075 (order no. 001202.0116). A duplicate copy of this paper is enclosed.

New Claims 523-530

Each of new claims 523-530 depends from allowable claims 157, 169, 179, 189, 198, 229, 234, and 245, respectively. These new claims are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as the claims from which they depend.

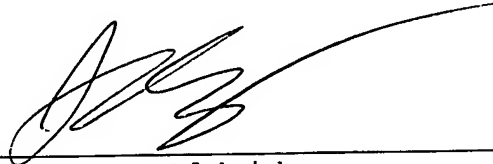
* It is applicant's and assignee's intention that if any change in the patent statutes changes the expiration date of parent Patent 6,682,981, or if U.S. Patent 6,682,981 is hereafter awarded patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. § 154(b), then the date beyond which the term of any patent to issue on this application is disclaimed shall change along with the expiration date of the parent patent.

Application No. 10/665,757
Amendment dated January 11, 2006
Reply to Office Action of November 2, 2005

Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 156-291, 394-399, 409-424, 448-455, 457-460, 462-464, 466-468, 470-485, and 523-530 are allowable. This application is therefore in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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